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Breeding
**MORGAN
HORSES**

*at the
U.S. Morgan Horse Farm*



MORGAN HORSES are generally chestnut, brown, bay, or black, and extensive white marks are not common. A little under 15 hands is the average height, with the average weight around 1,000 pounds; but, as in all breeds, considerable variation is to be found, some very attractive individuals weighing rather more than 1,200 pounds.

This breed has always been noted for smooth lines, good style, easy keeping qualities, endurance, and docility—the latter, however, not being obtained at a sacrifice of ambition or courage.

Small ears, full eyes with great width between them, crested necks, well-sprung ribs with the last one close to the point of the hip, deep barrels, fairly level croups, full quarters, and enduring legs and feet are the qualities that have made Morgan horses famous for a century.

Contribution from the Bureau of Animal Industry

JOHN R. MOHLER, Chief

Washington, D. C.

November, 1921

BREEDING MORGAN HORSES AT THE U. S. MORGAN HORSE FARM.

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Animal Husbandry Division.

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FOUNDATION OF THE BREED.

THE Morgan breed of horses was established by a single stallion whose potency was so great that he left many descendants that looked and acted like him even after his blood had been much diluted. This stallion was Justin Morgan. During his early life he was the property of a school-teacher by that name, who lived near Randolph, Vt. Justin Morgan was foaled about 1793 and died in 1821.

According to the meager records available, Justin Morgan was a small but powerful and quick horse, standing considerably under 15 hands. It is said that he could outwalk, outrun, or outpull any of the horses in his section of the country. Very little is definitely known of his ancestry, but the best evidence seems to indicate that he was sired by the Thoroughbred stallion True Briton, also called Beautiful Bay, a horse that traced in direct male line to Byerly Turk, and had many other traces of Arabian blood.

EARLY PROGENITORS.

Practically all the present-day Morgans trace to three of Justin Morgan's sons, namely, Sherman Morgan 5,¹ Woodbury Morgan 7,¹ and Bulrush Morgan 6.¹ These stallions populated the New England States with their descendants, which became noted for their ruggedness, style, courage, and road qualities. They were also generally used for hauling and farm work.

Sherman Morgan 5 sired Black Hawk 20, one of the best-known grandsons of Justin Morgan, on account of his speed and great beauty. A very noted great-grandson of Justin Morgan was Green Mountain

¹ Registry numbers.

2d, commonly known as Hale's Green Mountain Morgan 42, sired by Gifford Morgan 30, he by Woodbury Morgan 7. This stallion won the highest premiums at the State fairs of Ohio, Michigan, and Kentucky in 1853, and won the first premium at the Vermont State Fair in 1854, besides many other premiums.

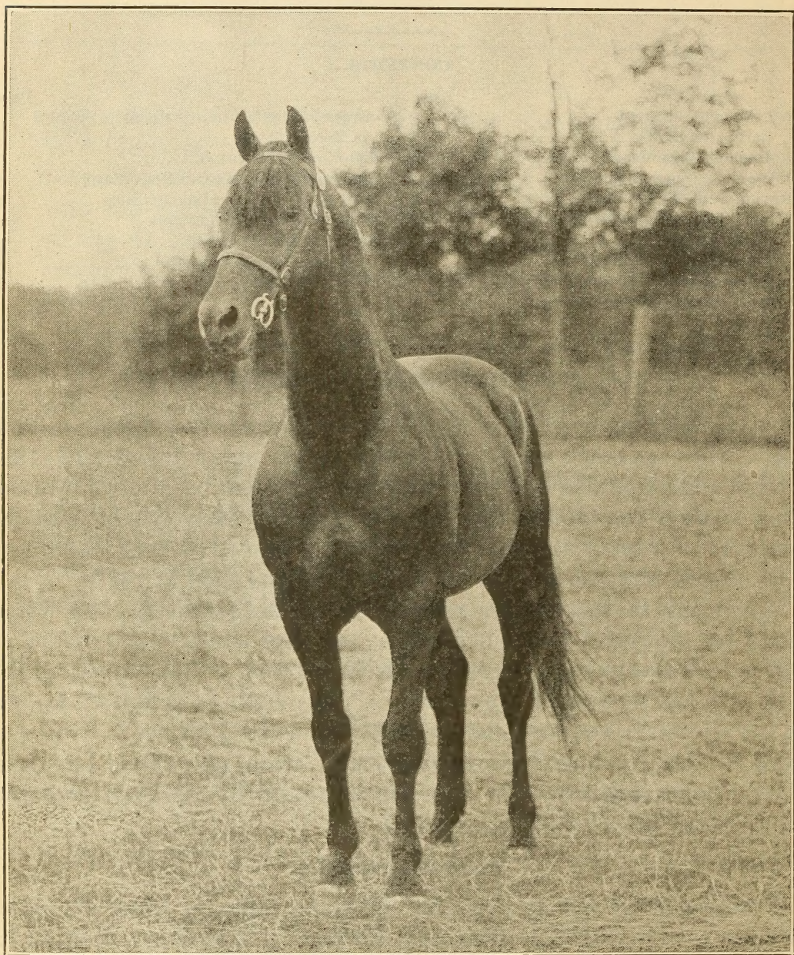


FIG. 1.—Morgan stallion Troubadour of Willowmoor No. 6459 A. M. R. Premier stallion at U. S. Morgan Horse Farm. Height, 15.2 hands; weight, 1,200 pounds. Note Morgan countenance, wonderful development of chest, and strong, clean bone. (See tabulated pedigree, page 18.)

DIFFUSION OF MORGAN BLOOD.

For many years the breed flourished. Morgans were used practically to the exclusion of other horses in the New England States until a craze for trotting speed struck the country and much of the best Morgan stock was then mixed with trotting blood. This resulted

in the loss of the beautiful form and quality of the Morgan and did not make him a trotting race horse. It did add stamina and endurance to certain trotting-horse families, for which the Morgan breed deserves considerable credit.

In the early days many high-class Morgan stallions and mares were purchased at attractive prices and taken to other sections of the country, and while a few scattering studs were bred pure in their new locations, many of them were absorbed by other breeds, such as the Kentucky Saddle Horse. The identity of many was lost, not because of a lack of ability to improve the stock in their new surroundings but because definite breeding records were not kept in many rural sections and repeated transfers of ownership occurred.

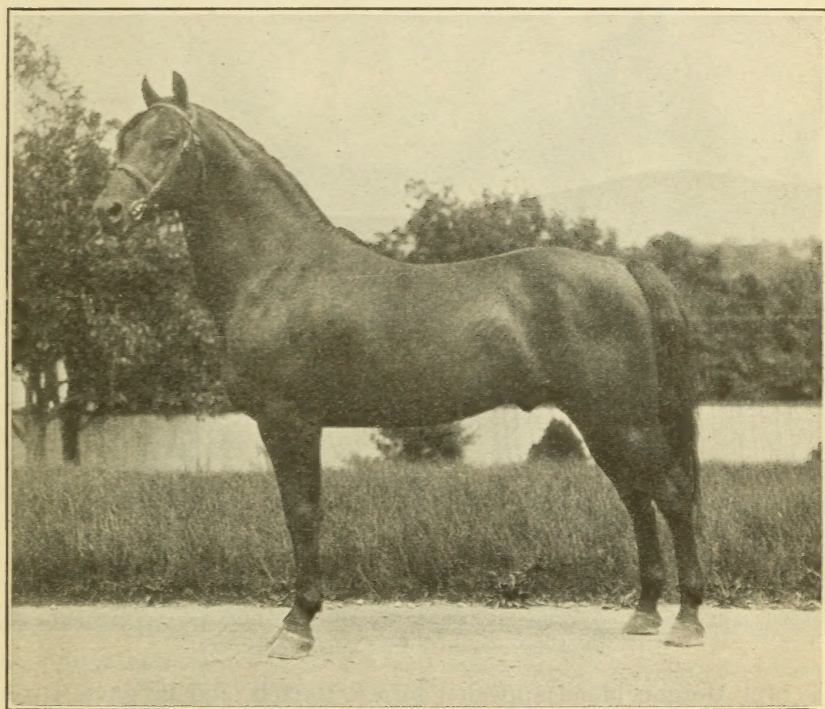


Fig. 2.—Side view of Morgan stallion Troubadour of Willowmoor No. 6459 A. M. R.

MOVEMENT TO CONSERVE BEST BLOOD.

This diluting and scattering of valuable Morgan blood went on for many years and no one gave any serious thought to the matter. At least, no definite action was taken until a comparatively few years ago, when several public-spirited men, who knew personally of the many meritorious qualities of the Morgan horse, made an effort to preserve the best specimens of the breed. In 1906 the United States Department of Agriculture and the Vermont State Experiment Station were authorized to assemble a small band of Morgan

mares at the station farm near Burlington, which formed the beginning of a permanent project to conserve and perpetuate the best of the breed.

ORIGIN OF U. S. MORGAN HORSE FARM.

The late Joseph Battell, of Middlebury, Vt., had long been a great admirer of Morgan horses and had raised many high-class horses of this breed at his Breadloaf Stock Farms. Mr. Battell was also the founder of the American Morgan Register, a work which took up the authentic recording of Morgan bloodlines at a point where D. C. Linsley, also of Middlebury, left off. The movement to keep together

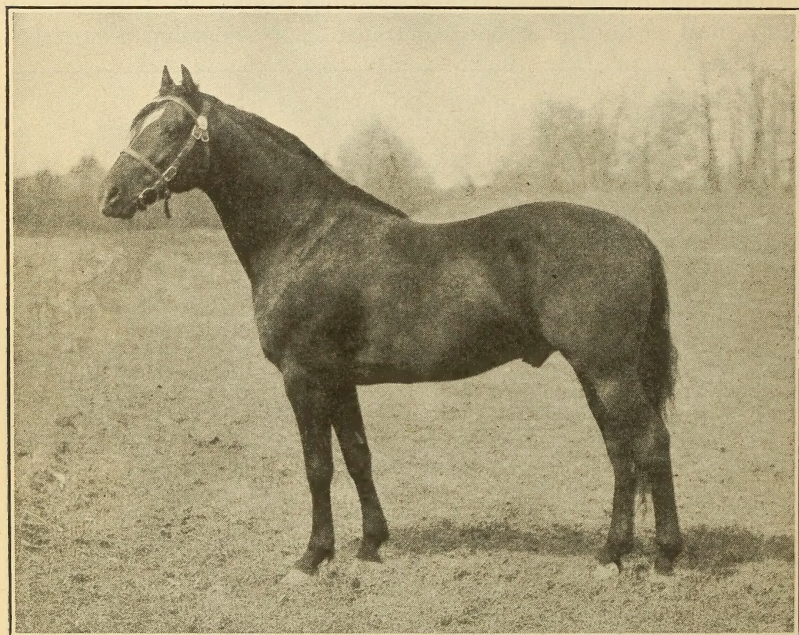


FIG. 3.—Morgan stallion Bennington No. 5693 A. M. R. Bred by U. S. Morgan Horse Farm. A successful sire of high-class colts in the Army horse-breeding work.

the best Morgan blood appealed to Mr. Battell, and he gave to the United States Department of Agriculture a farm of 400 acres 2 miles north of Middlebury, in the town of Weybridge. The gift put the work on a much more substantial foundation and gave greater opportunity in the way of pasture and equipment for the care of the breeding stock.

The stock from the Burlington station, as well as new purchases, were taken to the Battell farm in Weybridge in 1907, and this line of breeding has since been conducted there. The farm, at the donor's request, was officially named "The U. S. Morgan Horse Farm." During that and more recent years exhibits were made at the Vermont State and Addison County Fairs.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE FARM.

The farm was put in first-class condition for carrying on the breeding work. All buildings were put in good repair, electric lights were installed, and substantial woven-wire fences were built. A well 485 feet deep was drilled, which furnishes an abundance of water for all buildings and pastures, and affords a reserve for fire protection.

FARM ENLARGED.

In 1908 Mr. Battell deeded to the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm another tract of land, known as the Cotton Farm, which adjoined the

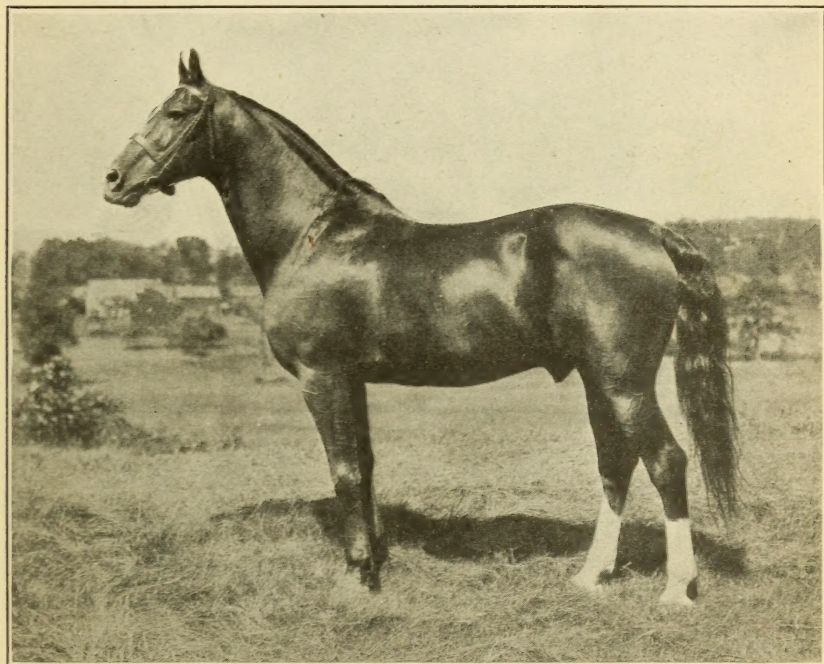


FIG. 4.—Morgan stallion Scotland No. 6000 A. M. R. Used in the Army horse-breeding work in Vermont and stationed at the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm during the idle season.

original tract and contained about 35 acres, together with a house and two barns. These buildings soon after were used to house the shepherd and a flock of excellent sheep which was very beneficial in keeping down weeds and brush in the pastures. The sheep work has been carried on only as a supplement and aid to the Morgan horse-breeding work, with which it is not allowed to interfere.

In 1917 the department purchased about 550 acres, including two dwellings and four barns, from Middlebury College. This land lies to the north of and adjoins the original farm. In all, the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm now comprises approximately 1,000 acres. The land is gently rolling and is underlain with limestone which

occasionally shows at the surface. The soil is of the muck and Vergennes-clay types, with the latter predominating. It is natural grass and hay land, and the limestone disintegrating adds mineral matter which produces horses with strong bone. All the young stock develop good feet from galloping over the stony ledges, and the agility and muscular development thus gained are also very desirable. Some of the level fields have been tile-drained and yield good crops of corn, oats, and alfalfa, as well as hay. This system of cropping practically maintains the livestock on the farm. In fact, during the

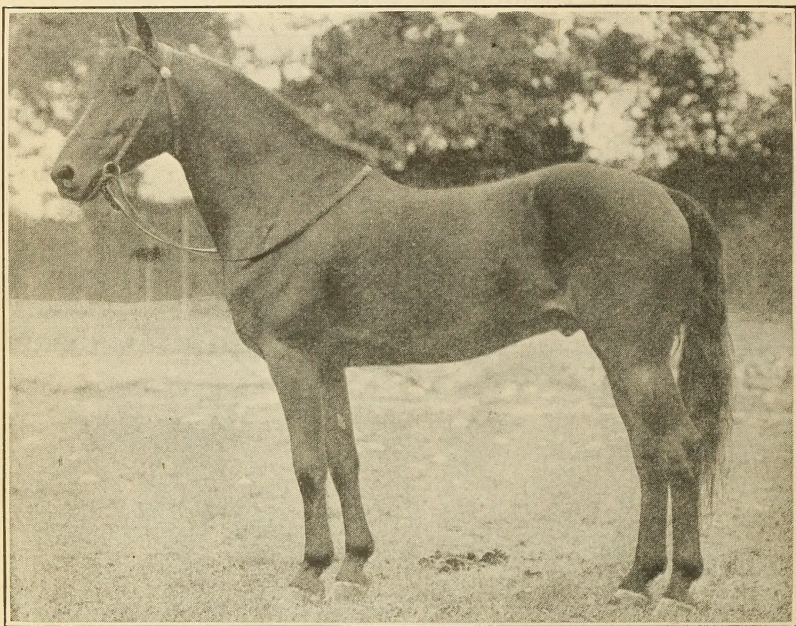


FIG. 5.—Morgan stallion Donlyn No. 5849 A. M. R. Used in the Army horse-breeding work under supervision of the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm until 1920, when he was sold for export to Japan together with other representative Morgans.

winter of 1920–21 no feed was purchased for the horses (including work horses) except small quantities of bran and oil meal which were used to supplement the farm-grown grains. The U. S. Morgan Horse Farm has 7 horse barns, containing a total of 70 stalls; 4 mare and colt sheds, with a total capacity of 30 head; 1 sheep barn large enough for 150 breeding ewes; 3 hay barns; and 7 houses for the help.

BREEDING STOCK PURCHASED.

Those in charge of the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm have spared no effort in running down the descendants of the best of the Morgans sold in the early days and sent from New England to other sections of the country. They have obtained stock in Kentucky, Kansas,

Texas, New York, Washington, Iowa, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Illinois, as well as in the native State of Vermont. Private stallions have also been liberally patronized, the whole effort being to get into the Government stud the very best Morgan blood in the country.

NOTED ANCESTORS OF U. S. MORGAN HORSES.

That the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm has some of the best Morgan blood in the country is shown in part by the following statements:

Laura Jay won the Morgan mare class at the 1919 International at Chicago. This mare has also won several prizes, including cham-



FIG. 6.—Morgan stallion General Gates No. 666 A. M. R. Formerly premier stallion on the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm. General Gates died December 13, 1920.

pionships, at the Vermont State Fair, as well as at the Eastern States Exposition, to say nothing of smaller shows. Laura Jay has recently been added to the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm stud and is the dam of Ruth, another valuable brood mare at the farm. Ruth won the blue in her class at the Vermont State Fair in 1916. Reynard 5624, the sire of Ruth, has many winnings to his credit, and the farm also has an excellent prospect in a yearling filly by him.

Lyndon 5080, a full brother of Reynard 5624, has won repeatedly at the Vermont State Fair; he is also the sire of Lady Lyndon, one of the farm brood mares. Lady Lyndon's dam is sired by Bob Morgan

4549, a stallion of approved type and breeding and a former consistent winner at shows where Morgans participated. Bob Morgan's blood is also represented at the Government farm by Babe, one of the brood mares; by Troubadour of Willowmoor 6459, the premier sire, whose dam is by Bob Morgan 4549; and by the get of Donlyn 5849, whose sire Donald 5224 was by Bob Morgan 4549. Donlyn 5849 has taken many prizes at the Vermont State Fair and won distinction in 1912 by being awarded the blue ribbon in three distinct classes, namely, for stallion in hand, for stallion under saddle, and for stallion in harness. He is also full brother of Donwindsor 6853, the grand champion stallion at the Vermont State Fair in 1915.

Headlight Morgan 4683 was champion Morgan stallion at the Kansas State Fair for several years. The farm has his blood in his daughter Sunflower Maid, and in his granddaughter Mertilla and his grandsons Meredith 7230 and Nodaway 7236. Sunflower Maid's dam, Fanny P., also a farm brood mare, is by Julian Morgan 4448, the sire of Roy Morgan 6013, a winner at the Philadelphia and western shows with his mate Meteor Morgan 4459.

Meteor Morgan 4459 was also a winner in single classes at large shows, as well as a sire of winners in the West. Meteor Morgan's sire, Meteor 3840, won the Morgan stallion harness class at the World's Fair in Chicago, 1893. The farm has this blood in granddaughters of Meteor Morgan, Juno, Klyona, and Laurice, and in a grandson, Langley 7229.

Some of the farm mares are sired by General Gates 666, a stallion that won many prizes. He is the sire of Ara Gates, winner of first place at the Vermont State Fair in 1911 and 1912, as well as the sire of Scotland 6000, also winner at that fair. Carrie Gates and Maggie Gates were winners at the World's Fair at St. Louis, 1904.

This list could be greatly extended, but only a few ancestors close up are given to show the class of blood in the stud. Going further back, such Morgan celebrities as Lady de Jarnette, Black Hawk 20, Daniel Lambert 62, Ethan Allen 2d 406, Ethan Allen 3d 3987, Peter's Morgan 405, Hale's Green Mountain Morgan 42, and many others are constantly encountered.

MORGAN HORSE FARM PRIZE WINNERS.

From the standpoint of producing prize winners, the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm has made considerable progress. Troubadour of Willowmoor 6459, the farm's premier stallion, was first in the Morgan stallion class at the 1919 International with nine contestants. McMahon 6900, sired by Scotland 6000 (one of the Government stallions which stood for public service), and out of a mare by General Gates 666, was the champion Morgan stallion at the 1920 Vermont State

Fair. Heather, a full sister to McMahon 6900, was the champion Morgan mare at the 1916 Vermont State Fair.

In 1920 a suckling foal, sired by Bennington 5693, a U. S. Morgan Horse Farm product standing for public service, was reserve champion at the Vermont State Fair, and champion at the Woodstock (Vt.) Fair. Another suckling foal, also sired by Bennington 5693, was second in his class at the State fair and reserve champion at Woodstock. These foals also won first and second in the class for



FIG. 7.—Morgan gelding Castor, bred by U. S. Morgan Horse Farm. In 1919 he carried 200 pounds and finished the 300-mile endurance ride in 51 hours and 18 minutes, the second-best time made. In 1920 Castor carried 245 pounds and finished the 300-mile endurance ride in 58 hours and 40 minutes.

remount foals at Woodstock. Foals by Troubadour of Willowmoor 6459 won the remount class at the Addison County Fair. The get of Scotland 6000 have also won many prizes at the latter fair. These winnings are of added significance when it is recalled that, with the exception of the exhibition of the stallion Troubadour of Willowmoor 6459, at Chicago in 1919, the stock owned by the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm has not been shown in competition. All the prizes referred to have been won, with one exception, by stock belonging to individuals who breed only one or two mares a year.

INCREASE IN SIZE AND IMPROVEMENT IN QUALITY OF MORGAN HORSES.

While size has not received greater consideration than other qualities, there has been a steady increase in the weights and heights of the horses maintained in the stud. A definite idea is given in the following table:

Increase in height and weight.

Average height:	1911	1916	1921
Mature stallions.....hands..	14. 3	15. 0	15. 1½
Mature mares.....do....	14. 2½	14. 3	14. 3½
Average weight:			
Mature stallions.....pounds..	1, 025	1, 040	1, 200
Mature mares.....do....	1, 025	1, 049	1, 063

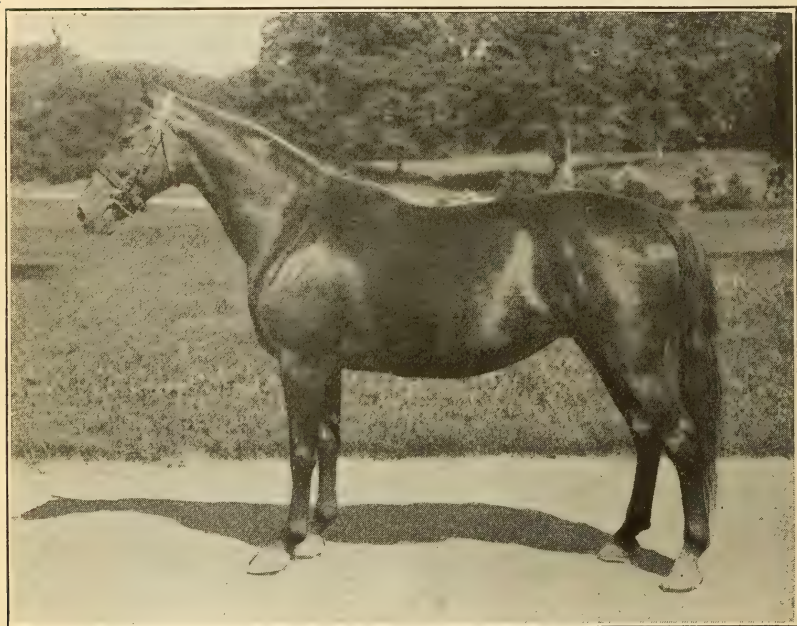


FIG. 8.—Eudora, bred by U. S. Morgan Horse Farm and now used as a brood mare as well as for single and double driving. Eudora is a full sister to Castor.

That pronounced progress has been made in the general quality of the horses produced on the farm is shown by citing a few specific cases of disposals of surplus stock:

A coming 4-year-old mare, bred at the farm, was sold for a little more than \$500, to be used under saddle by a young lady.

A 5-year-old gelding, from farm stock, was sold for \$300, to be used under saddle by an Army officer.

A 4-year-old gelding sold for \$1,000 soon after leaving the farm.

A pair of geldings sold in ordinary condition for \$750.

A stallion, mare, and suckling foal sold at a very good price for export to Japan.

A pair of Morgan geldings and a pair of Morgan mares were furnished for use by the Secretary of Agriculture, at Washington.

ENDURANCE OF THE BREED.

Castor 5833, a gelding bred at the farm, completed the 1919, 1920, and 1921 endurance tests of 300 miles for the American mounted service cup. In 1919 he finished second in point of time, but was not given a prize on account of a fall the last day. In 1920 he drew seventh place, and in 1921 he was given fourth prize, and was one of six to finish the test, out of 17 starters. He is the only horse, except the Arabians, which has completed more than one of these contests. Castor 5833 is a full brother of Eudora, placed by a visiting committee of the Morgan Horse Club in 1920 as the second-best brood mare on the farm, giving precedence only to her dam, Babe.



FIG. 9.—Faith, bred by the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm and now used as a brood mare as well as in a carriage pair

Dolly, a registered Morgan mare that finished sixth in the 1920 endurance ride, was bred by the United States Department of Agriculture on the remount plan. She was sired by Dewey 6481, and he was bred by the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm.

DISTRIBUTION FROM MORGAN HORSE FARM.

A limited number of young Morgans, including stallions, mares, and geldings, are for sale from the farm each year. They are disposed of at private sale. Stock from the farm has gone to many States, as well as to Porto Rico, the Island of Guam, and Japan. Morgans "nick" well and decidedly improve the native stock of such

countries, and it is likely that in the future the demand for Morgans will increase.

Young stallions bred at the farm have been used in sections in this country where good light stallions are needed. The stallion Lucky is in service on a ranch in Texas. Dewey 6481 has "made good" as a sire in the section around Franklin, N. C., as well as in the remount work. Bennington 5693, Dundee 6479, and Forester 6918 have aided in carrying on the military horse-breeding work. Mandarin 7239, Melvin 7231, Magistrate 7232, and Linsley 7233 have been shipped to remount stations, where they will be used in breeding remounts. Red Oak 5249 is proving of especial value on a ranch in



FIG. 10.—Brood mares and foals on pasture at U. S. Morgan Horse Farm.

Texas in improving the quality of the Morgan horses bred there. Stallions placed from the farm in various sections in Vermont and New Hampshire under the remount plan, beginning in 1913, and stallions standing at the farm for public service previous to that year, have sired a total of 700 foals.

The farm on numerous occasions has also been the means of bringing buyer and seller together, since it is generally known where horses for particular uses can be found in the surrounding country. Last summer the farm was the intermediary in 12 such instances and in all of them the Morgans that changed hands traced to Government stock, most of them being sired by Government stallions.

PROGRESS MADE IN BREEDING MORGANS.

The first few years in a project of this kind are always the hardest, as the foundation stock can not be ideal. It takes time to improve

horses, as several years must elapse before a second generation can be produced to breeding age. Each generation, however, makes it possible to combine more bloodlines to advantage. As an example, the yearling stallion Nodaway 7236 carries even better Morgan bloodlines than the premier stallion Troubadour of Willowmoor 6459, whose extended pedigree shows 71 authentic traces to Justin Morgan, including many popular and well-known horses. Nodaway's pedigree shows 150 authentic traces to Justin Morgan, and he likewise has many illustrious ancestors, having been sired by Donlyn 5849 out of Sunflower Maid, both of which have been referred to.



FIG. 11.—Meadow land on U. S. Morgan Horse Farm.

This is but one instance of the improvement in individuality and bloodlines that is being produced by carefully worked out matings.

MANAGEMENT OF BREEDING STOCK.

The stallions on the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm are all well mannered and consequently can fill many necessary tasks in harness. Troubadour of Willowmoor is used constantly for driving to Middlebury for supplies. Scotland has been used in the surrey to take the children on the farm to school in Middlebury; and Bennington, among his useful duties, has hauled a light load of silage each morning from the main barn to the sheep barn.

The mares, too, are put to useful jobs as circumstances warrant. Eudora, Faith, Calve, Jessie, and Ruth helped with the 1920 fall

farm work and were used also for driving. Jessie (4-year-old) and Ruth (5-year-old) have developed into a very useful pair of farm mares.

The young stock is kept outdoors as much as possible, with open sheds for shelter. A sufficient quantity of feed of good kind and quality is allowed for proper development, but no attempt is made to keep the young stock in show shape. Bran, oats, alfalfa, and timothy are the usual feeds given.

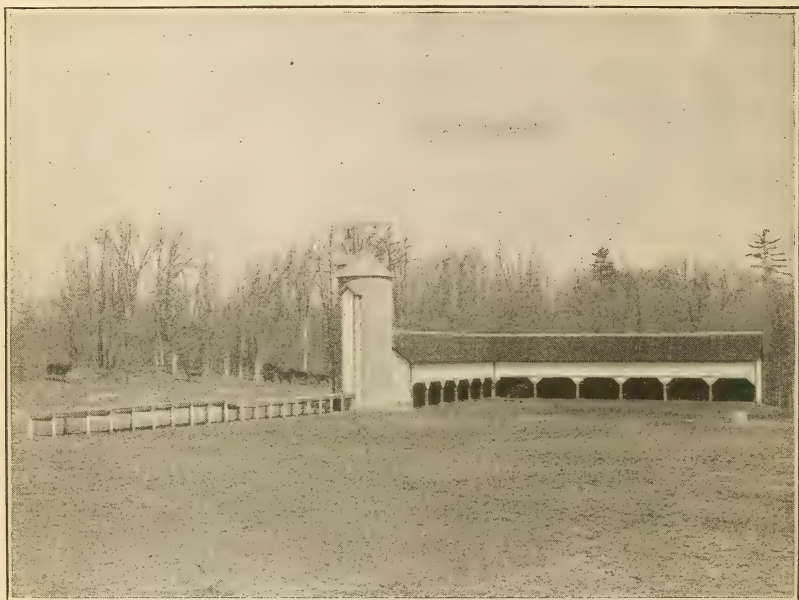


FIG. 12.—Brood-mare shed on U. S. Morgan Horse Farm.

USES FOR MORGAN HORSES.

It has just been shown that Morgan mares do farm work on the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm. Morgans walk much faster than draft horses; they generally trot with an empty wagon; and they eat less feed. The U. S. Morgan Horse Farm has a striking illustration of this in an 1,100-pound Morgan gelding that has worked on the farm for several years as mate to a 1,450-pound draft gelding. The draft gelding is an extra good horse, but the Morgan is the better horse of the pair to-day. He has had no advantage over the draft gelding, does his full share of the work, and stays in better condition on less feed. He is quicker, stands heat much better, and makes a good carriage horse in an emergency.

MORGANS AS SADDLE HORSES.

As pleasure saddle horses, Morgans are in demand on account of their great intelligence and hardiness. They generally have a smart,

alert walk, an easy trot, and a smooth, collected canter. Morgan cow horses have made a good reputation with the cattlemen of the South and West. Morgan stallions crossed on the proper type of range mares are said to produce the ideal cow horse. Morgans have the intelligence and courage to "hold" a steer after it has been roped.

The great reputation made by the First Vermont Cavalry in the Civil War is a matter of record. This regiment was mounted on Morgan horses, and official reports made to the War Department stated that the horses in this organization stood the hardships of the campaigns better than any others. Their short, strong legs, round,



FIG. 13.—Headquarters, U. S. Morgan Horse Farm. The ewes in the foreground are part of the Government's flock of purebred Southdown sheep in which three International grand champions have been bred.

full-muscled bodies, and beautiful heads called forth universal admiration. A cavalry horse's part in warfare has not changed so much that what applied during the Civil War will not apply to-day. Hardiness and endurance always have been and always will be the prime essentials of a cavalry horse, and it is doubtful whether any breed excels the Morgan in the proper combination of all the characteristics demanded in such a horse.

The police horses of New York City have a national reputation for their uniformity of type, color (all being bays), good looks, intelligence, and all-round suitability for the job. They are probably nearer the type of good-sized Morgans than of any other present-day American breed. In fact, Jetmore, a U. S. Morgan Horse Farm product, is considered by expert judges to be an ideal police horse, and he is now doing regular duty in Central Park, New York City.

VALUE OF MORGAN BLOOD.

The horse history of this country is replete with the show-ring achievements of horses of Morgan blood. Lord Baltimore, Indian Chief, Cabell's Lexington, and Lady de Jarnette are but a few of the many names that might be given. Some of the foremost figures in both trotting-horse and saddle-horse history from the early days to the present, show a foundation of Morgan blood. To quote George F. Paul:

The Morgan imparted his strength and endurance to the trotter, he gave freely of his courage and beauty to the saddler. The name of Justin Morgan must be classed with those of Messenger and Denmark as founders of the two great American breeds of light horses. Without the prepotency of the Morgan horses, the present-day show rings would lose some of their most attractive performers.

Volumes might be written on the value of Morgan blood, but the value is generally conceded. Will not this blood be of value again and will not this country again be calling for it to inject more bottom and courage into our light-horse stock? Who will preserve this blood and keep it pure? Private breeders have not shown a disposition to do it. Left to individuals, the pure Morgan blood remaining in this country is likely to be lost by the disbanding of breeding herds and by subsequent outcrosses. Under Federal care it can be continued indefinitely and a fountainhead of this valuable blood made always available at the U. S. Morgan Horse Farm.

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